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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 001642

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [UN](#) [IS](#) [LE](#) [PO](#)
SUBJECT: PORTUGAL OFFERS VIEWPOINT ON LEBANON SECURITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTION

REF: STATE 128442

Classified By: Acting Pol/Econ Couns Cari Enav for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) On August 7, Acting Pol/Econ Couns delivered reftel demarche and draft resolution to Acting Director for International Political Organizations Helena Paiva and Israel-Arab Affairs Desk Officer Maria Joao Coutinho. Paiva, who previously worked for the Portuguese Mission to the UN, agreed that the Security Council needed to speak with one voice and reiterated Portugal's support for the EU position on the conflict. With regard to the resolution, while Portugal had no issues with the current draft, Paiva commented that it would probably need to be amended slightly to bring Hezbollah on board. After all, she noted, if the parties to the conflict did not accept the resolution, it would be ineffectual and make the UN look weak.

¶2. (C) Beyond the immediate issue of adopting the resolution, Paiva and Coutinho commented that for any permanent ceasefire to hold, the international community would also need to bring pressure to bear on Iran and Syria. Paiva commented privately that the Europeans were very concerned about Hezbollah and were hoping Israel would be able to achieve its objective of significantly weakening it.

¶3. (C) Paiva noted that Portugal would consider contributing to a UN international force, contingent upon the cessation of hostilities and the force's mandate. Whether the contingent was comprised of military, police or civilian personnel would depend on the second resolution. She commented that any military and/or police force would need Chapter VII (Seven) powers to protect the civilian population, and that many nations, already stretched thin by other global conflicts, were wary of putting their troops in such a position.

¶4. (C) Comment: Portugal tends to follow EU consensus rather than lead. It is unclear why the government has chosen to be on the forefront of the EU effort to deal with the crisis, calling for an Extraordinary GAERC on Aug 1, offering to send personnel to Lebanon, flying foreign nationals out of Beirut early on in the conflict and transporting UN Humanitarian Assistance into the country. Paiva and Coutinho were well briefed on the issue and very interested in the U.S. position and assessment of the situation. In addition, Paiva was particularly concerned about Hezbollah's rejection of the resolution. If Hezbollah did not buy-in, she commented, the fighting would not end anytime soon.

O'Neal